

# LUNARK

LASTEST SIGNAL READS

we wish to register  
for Derby in '99

EPSILON BOÖTIS  
PROBE

TRACKING ROOM  
KNOCK 8,11,15,8,13,3,8,  
8,8,12,15,13,8,88 TIMES  
THEN ENTER

WENT TO LAUNCH

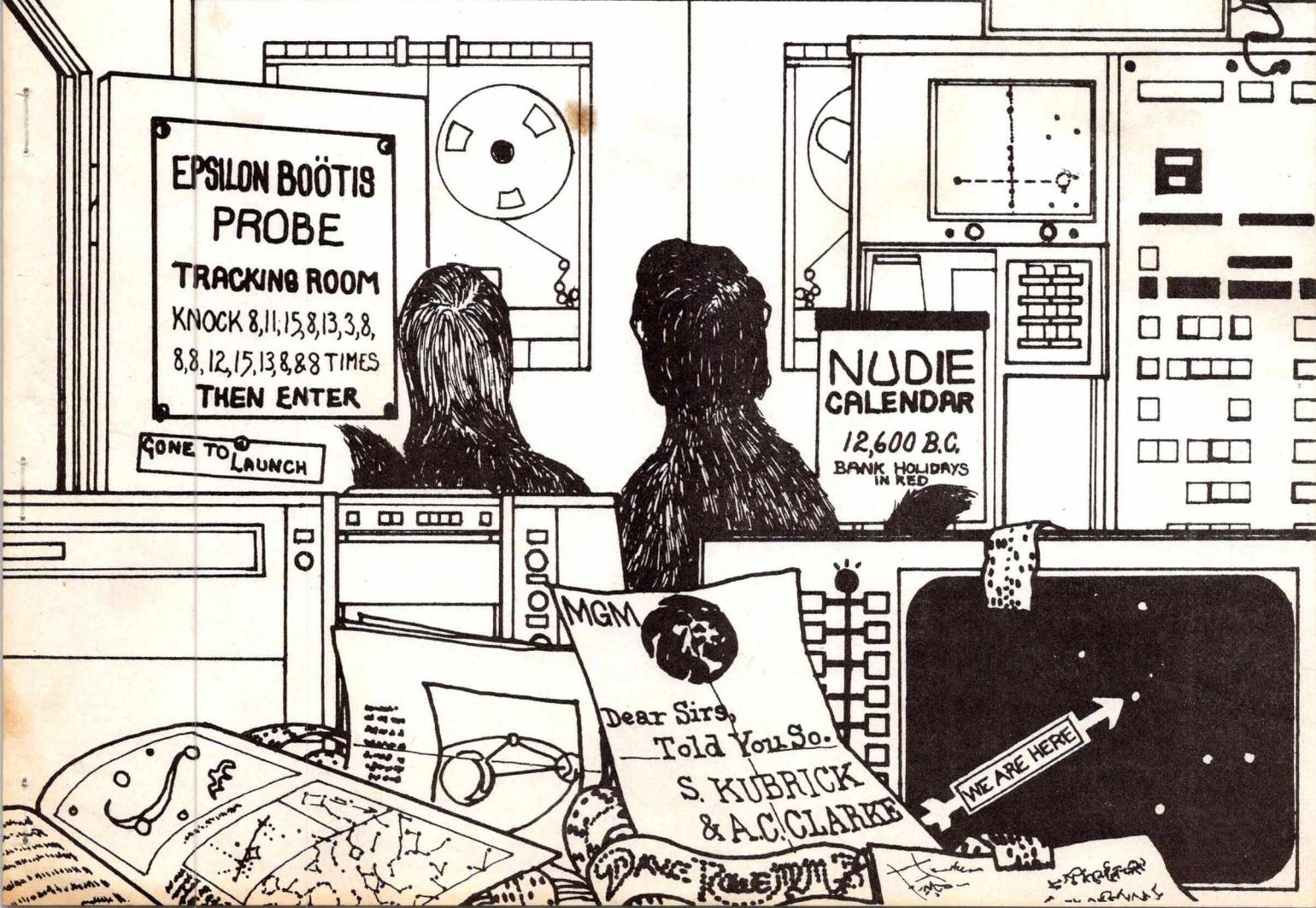
NUDIE  
CALENDAR

12,600 B.C.  
BANK HOLIDAYS  
IN RED

MGM

Dear Sirs,  
Told You So.  
S. KUBRICK  
& A.C. CLARKE

WE ARE HERE

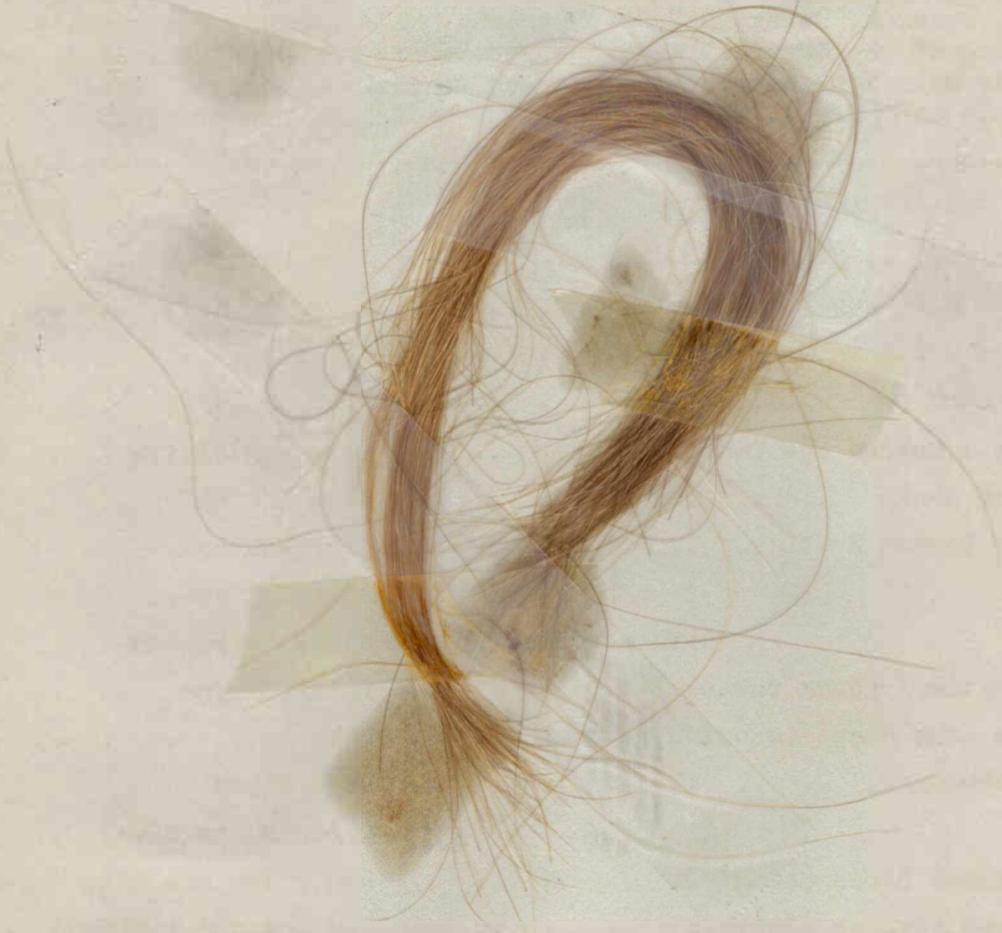


Why you are receiving this issue of LURK:

- a) You are an OMPAn.
- b) You contributed.
- c) Your contribution appears on .....
- d) You sent a LoC.
- e) Your LoC appears on .....
- f) We trade - don't we?
- g) Your zine is reviewed on .....
- h) We'd like to trade for your .... DILEMMA .....
- i) You asked or paid for it.
- j) We thought you might be interested. ✓
- k) Your book is reviewed herein.
- l) .. PLEASE .. LoC .....



A 'loc' from Dave Rowe



# JUST FOR A LURK

Is it a bird? Is it a plane? Nope - wrong again: it's an EDITORIAL!!!! (wow)

Excuse the tatty header (if it is: if it isn't, then shutuphowdareyou). I was just feeling too lazy to get the stencil guide out. Well gosh I mean here we are with another LURK, and only SEVEN MONTHS since the last one (which was also number six, apparently - I bow to your better judgement and worse eyesight, Buck, Don and the others). Is this a record? No, it's an editorial - how many times do I have to tell me? And to what, you may well ask, can we attribute this miracle? One thing, and one thing only: ~~importance~~ no not that - TYNECON, the highest and biggest British con yet. Highest? Well, yes...if you stood Britain on its ~~tip~~ base, then Newcastle would be the highest consite yet - sec? Regular readers, and maybe some constipated ones as well, will remember how OMPAcon put us off pubbing for mmmm simply ages, ducky. Well, Tynecon did the opposite, and within days of returning, with a rush of blood to the head and typing finger, umpteen stencils were completed to add to the other umpteen that had been waiting forlornly since January. BUT....sad news: LURK will soon be no more. Instead, a personal-type zine, thinner, but more frequent.

But more of that next time. Let us return to Tynecon....no, not literally, idiot; in spirit (mine's a brandy and coke....no? oh.) 509 members and 415 attending, said the proud notice on the board. So they broke the 500 barrier quite easily in the end. At one stage (497 I think) they were trying to persuade people to register twice. Tut! Somehow we ended up getting there by train, which turned out to be a very silly idea. Not that the train was late (well, just a bit) or hot (well, just a bit) or smoky (well,...) or crowded, or... By car next year, wherever it is. Well, there we were in our little third-floor hotel room, with me thinking of that other hotel in THE DROWNED WORLD. Any minute I expected an iguana to leap out of the washbasin and expire of heat-stroke on the floor. With one bound I was ~~free~~ at the radiator, turning it off. And opening the window. By Sunday morning it was just nice and comfortable. And the Stewarts (Alan and Elke) were complaining it was cold! Fans are a funny lot, bah gum. Anyway, down to the con hall for the first jolly old programme item; Ian Maule, the Creature from the Black Lagoon. Oh, sorry; first the film, then Ian Maule, the Chairman's Welcome, started his balls rolling. Well that's what it says on my copy of the programme. After which Ken Bulmer (poor lad, he gets all the bum jobs) attempted to introduce the celebrities - excluding the 24% who were still on their way there, and the other 76% who were in the bar. Every year the same. Now for the Convention Photograph; a bemused gent crept onto the stage, snapped off a quick half-dozen assorted shots of the assembled mob, and departed rapidly. Obviously someone had warned him about Pete Presford. On examining the proofs, we found that we were prominently featured on half of them, which could explain the distinct lack of eager customers. What was next? Ah yes; Out Of The Slushpile, Four New Writers it says here. Didn't see that one - probably in the bookroom or something. Ian Williams, Son of Galloping Gourmet, recommended an Indian restaurant called the Koh-i-noor, whence we went with Pamela Boal. You think pushing a wheelchair is easy? My stomach muscles (oh yes, I do have some) told

me different. (See my book: I WAS THE WORLD'S MOST IMPERFECTLY DEVELOPED FAN -- AND STILL AM). "The Future of Fanzines: is there a future for these idiosyncratic publications" it says here. My god, who wrote this stuff? It's enough to turn you on to Vargo Statten. The panel was quite well chosen, and bumbled entertainingly enough, but got no closer to solving the problem of how to explain what a fanzine is to a neo who's never seen one. "Linguistics in SF" was quite a good exercise in improving your shorthand speed, to judge from the comments of the steady trickle of departees. Dave Rowe offered to wind it up, but chickened out when we tried to push him inside the con hall to carry out his task.

Got up for breakfast Saturday...and Sunday, and Monday. Is this a record? No, it's still the editorial (but only another forty lines to go, folks. Just stand up and chew this liquorice stick - you'll get a good run for your money). Missed most of the programme, for various reasons, called Fred Hemmings. He, in his usual making-you-an-offer-you-can't-refuse style, suggested that I'd love to be a B.S.F.A. council member. Thus, part of the morning was spent in Keith Freeman's room discussing this and, among other things, cons and con bids. The possibility of using a university campus as a consite was suggested, since the prospect of an influx of hordes of semi-demented loonies, courtesy of SCIENCE FICTION MONTHLY, would further limit the choice of hotels for future cons. Lunch was spent in a delightfully average Chinese restaurant, with Pete Roberts, the Stewarts and Michel Feron. Somehow we got talking about unrepealed laws; did you know you can be fined a shilling for not going to church on Sunday? Or that it's illegal for nuns to wear habits? Picture the scene:

P.C. 49 (for it is he): Excuse me madam, I shall 'ave to arsk you to accompany me to the station. In view of your vow of silence, I'm sure I don't 'ave to arsk you to come along quietly.  
Ohohohoho.

Nun: Sod off, you flat-footed illegitimate son of a putrified dog-turd!

The disco seemed a fair success, after a few caustic comments from the deejay had got a few more people on their feet. The kids seemed to love it, anyway. The fancy dress parade seems to be going through a revival recently; this year there were two highspots - Vera Johnson the singing nurse, and the Wizard of Oz-based tableau at the end, with Anne McCaffrey as a superb witch. I always wondered who she reminded me of.

Sunday morning and the B.S.F.A. A.G.M., where I was duly elected to the council (see my book: "Today, the B.S.F.A. - tomorrow...the B.S.F.A."). At the con bidding session only two bids for next year materialised, though as many as four had been rumoured. For the benefit of all of you who weren't there, the winning committee are using the '75 con as a trial run for a proposed Worldcon over here in 1979. If you're in support, please publicise it. Ian Williams appeared rather hot under the collar during the sf quiz - proving that, as last year, it's no job for an overworked committee member, midway through the third day of the con. The banquet was dud, as expected. The only reason for going is the atmosphere, and the quote cards of course. Amazing how poor food gets the imagination working. Played cards until about 4.30am - most of what I lost, Pat won back. Lots of other nice things happened, but no room to mention. Nice one, Tynecon.

HYPHEN  
ORLON  
WARHOON

TRIODE  
OPSIA

ERG  
DYNATRON  
| INNUENDO  
TRUMFET

APORRHETA

GAMBLT  
OUTWORLDS  
LIGHHOUSE  
DOUBLE-BILL  
ETHERLINE  
NEXUS  
-  
AXE  
GESTALT  
ENTROPY

Firstly, let me dispose of that title over there, which, of course, is a complete misnomer since a 'Golden Age' can only be such in retrospect; and I am much too circumspect to intend this piece, this article of great profundities, seriously. But it does have a certain basis in fact, I think, and may be of interest to some budding fan-editor with a surplus of paper and a shortage of sense....

Any similarity between editing a fanzine and any other kind of magazine exists in the Name of the Game solely. Taking our collective heads out of the Sands of Mars, or the Bogs of Venus (where so many current faneds seem to find their inspiration!) for a moment, let us consider the greater Scheme Of Things, The Whole Picture, the wide, wide furshlugginer world. In general an Editor's job is to cater both for his public and his employer, though not necessarily in that order - that is, if he wishes to retain his editorship. In other words, an editor (outside of fandom) holds down a job. A sort of romantic, mystical job, to those on the outside, but a job just the same.

Our editor is usually a person with a fair command of English, a better command of invective and a wide knowledge of the law of libel. He's also, probably, ulcer-prone and a little cross-eyed from reading mis-typed manuscripts.

The Fan Editor, on the other hand, is a being of Ghodlike bearing whose head is frequently snow-capped all year round. He hasn't quite got the command of English that the pro-editor has, but he does have a better command of invective which, frequently, he resorts to - sotto voce - because of his lack of knowledge of the law of libel! In only one way are the two alike: the faned also, is ulcer-prone.

As regards the job he does, this is a highly divergent chore from that of the poor benighted pro-ed who has to please both his master and the masses. He (the faned) only has to please himself. That this, at times, is more difficult than pleasing the public is merely coincidental and can be cast aside before the author gets too profound.

A fan-editor puts out a magazine for his own personal satisfaction (there are other words around for it: egoboo, etc.) although it must be admitted that he hasn't always had this viewpoint. Originally, he was going to put out a magazine that would astound and amaze his readers, and all other fan-editors; a magazine that would make 'them' bow down each sunset in his general direction. He was going to 'start out in a small way' and 'end up with a zine that would sell like PLAYBOY on every newsstand'. These phrases are hereby dedicated to the neo-faned.....R.I.P.

FANAC  
BAS  
NOW & THEN  
ZENITH  
NEW FUTURIAN  
GOBOO

by

NEVER  
ROTSLER  
INSULANDER  
CHARTERS

BERGERON  
NEY  
NIRENBERG  
TUCKER  
COULSON  
LOCKE  
RWLN  
FOYSTER  
FITCH  
ELLIK

As a fanzine is put out more for personal satisfaction than any other reason, and as every person (we'll assume that fans are 'persons' for the sake of argument, eh?) has a slightly (?) different idea of what is Best in fanzine writing and styling and to him the only good zine around is his own, it follows, reasonably logically, that there is no point in continuing with this discussion! However, having reached this conclusion I shall proceed to ignore it, for, although it's true, it is also most unfannish to let mere logic deter any fan-writing. Before I completely abandon this train of thought, however, let me define a successful fan-editor as one whose taste is similar to that of the majority of his readers.

The fan-editor has far more 'free-will' than his professional brethren; he doesn't have to conform to standards set down by his employers. He can decide for himself what is, and what is not, pornography; what is controversy and what is merely mud-slinging; what is Good Taste - and sundry other imponderables. A successful fan-editor, then, can also be defined as one whose sense (or lack) of ethics conforms to that of his readership.

That majority referred to up above is rather important, and I'd draw your attention to it before you start heading for Holmes Chapel with a hatchet! I don't intend to imply that the successful fan-editor will please every fan - that is an absolute impossibility - but he will get a favourable reaction from the majority of those to whom his zine goes if he is successful.

The fan-editor, of course, has far more control over what goes into his magazine than the pro-editor, although it must be said that he must be able to project a personality much more emphatically, for the 'personality' of a fanzine is often more important than a pure-typeface, and, even, good layout. But accomplishment in the latter is essential if the faned is going to get himself a Hugo, or even top of the CHECKPOINT poll.

As to how a fan-editor should go about editing his zine is purely one of personal choice, and I can only give a guide to my own preferred methods back in the days when TRIODE and BASTION were my stint - BLAZON being a litho magazine requires a slightly different modus operandi.

Ninety percent of the material in those two magazines was written by invitation, since by the time they were published I'd been around long enough to establish contact with a fair number of fan-scribes of the period. And, of course, it goes without saying that you invite

material from fan who you consider to be capable writers and people who can write the type of material you want. This sounds obvious, and should be, but it is important to check on what a particular fan writes best about before inviting contributions; for instance, you wouldn't write to Walt Willis for a serious article on science fiction, nor to a pro-author of serious mien for a fan-mythology piece. But it has been done! Because contributions were written by invitation, and often to a suggested idea (I usually had a fair idea in my mind of what I wanted in each issue before inviting contributions) editing was usually cut to a minimum, but when it was required I always tried to get the writer in question to do it, where possible, so that the individual style of the piece wasn't lost. Naturally, there was still a certain amount of cutting and correction indulged in and because this was done diplomatically (or perhaps, because the writer had a bad memory!) I never had any complaints.

As the material came to hand, it was cut onto stencil as speedily as possible, with space left where I wanted illustrations and other embellishments. When on stencil it was sent off to the various fan-artists who were kind enough to illustrate for me - usually Arthur Thomson, Eddie Jones and Terry Jeeves. Jim Cawthorne also provided some very useable stuff for me, and Bill Rotsler used to keep me well supplied with fillos which Terry or Eddie would usually master for me. Whilst my prowess with a stylus was sufficient for letter-guides and 'abstract' fillos (Boots' plastic 'curves' were a big help here), I'd never rate myself as competent to transfer an artist's work onto stencil.

Then, as now, there were rumblings in the colonies about U.K. faneds and their lack of ability when it came to layout. Since display has always come into my work, I think I can claim truthfully, as regards the later issues of TRIODE and the three BASTIONS, not to have come into the category of condemnation. Damn it, anything worth publishing is worth presenting properly! And, if your contributors know their pieces are going to get good presentation, that makes it a lot easier to get good material.

One of the best ways of building up a fanzine is to get yourself a stable of good columnists, and I was fortunate enough in acquiring several who, in my opinion, wrote well and interestingly on almost anything - Mal Ashworth, for example. Little mention is made of him these days, but he was one of the best and most consistent fannish writers of a decade ago. I hope to get him to write for BLAZON.....I hope. And of course I had a couple of people, known as 'Hurstmonceux and Faversham' who wrote the stories of that well-known saviour of the Western Hemisphere, Sir Wm. Makepeace Harrison. I'm still not going to divulge who they were, but they will be back when BLAZON appears. I won't mention people like Mike Moorcock, Avram Davidson and Dick Lupoff, because it would sound like name-dropping!

As a general rule, I always tried to acknowledge all material by return, and to say in which issue it would appear and who I'd get to illo it. This, again, sounds obvious, but an awful lot of fan-editors couldn't be bothered to do this, and, naturally, they had more trouble getting a further piece from their neglected contributor than those who did. If you want an edict: if you want to keep a good writer, don't neglect him. Not that you should send

flowers on his wife's birthday (this could lead to misunderstandings), but a bottle of Blog on his, always helped!

Regularity of publication is, of course, also a factor in putting out a successful fanzine, but I've never believed in rushing an issue out purely and simply to meet a promised deadline. 'Vaguely Quarterly' always used to be my style, and I think it's best to publish to an un-announced schedule but with a reasonable regularity. And keep your secret deadline well in mind when accepting material, since it won't help your popularity to accept a piece that cries out for immediate publication because of its topicality if you know you won't be able to publish it for three months!

One other thing I should mention; if you don't possess a duplicator (and I never have) find yourself a master-duplicator. These can be easily recognised on sight by the fact that their right arms are longer than their left, and their fingernails are ink-stained to the elbow. I was very fortunate with TRIODE in having Terry Jeeves as publisher, and with BASTION, the inimitable Norman Shorrock.

.....eric bentcliffe

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## A FISTFUL OF BOOBS

Faux pas from the press, compiled by JOHN COOMBE.

Absence: I shall be away from the parish attending the Diocesan Clergy School from April 21 - 24. It will be convenient if parishioners will abstain from arranging to be buried, or from making other calls on me during this time.

To the Journal: On the evening of May 13, at about 7 o'clock, travelling north and giving off a roaring sound, my husband and I both clearly saw some silver-coloured objects in the sky.

I bought a few of your indigestion tablets last week. Now I feel a new man. (Original may be seen on request.)

For a moment he stood there looking into her eyes. Between them was a bowl of hyacinths.

The mate pushed his battered cap a few centimetres further back on his head, and displayed a magnificent row of hard white teeth.

"The defendant is a married man with a young family; otherwise he is well-behaved" said a police representative.

Morning dress or uniform will be worn at the ceremony. Mayors are requested to wear their chains of office only.

A dispatch from Moorehead said Red River Valley farmers will love heavily because of potatoes damaged by free zing in the fields.

# 2 TALK ON TORCON 2

the 31st world sf convention

VERA JOHNSON &  
MALCOLM DAVIES

September 1st 2nd 3rd 1973  
royal york hotel  
toronto  
ontario  
canada

Vera Johnson~

Excerpts from a Filksinger's Diary.

Thursday, 30th. August 1973:

Toronto, capital of the province of Ontario, Canada, population around 1½ million, location about 3,000 miles east of my home base, Vancouver. Luckily I have managed to arrange two singing engagements here and that will cover the bus fare. Toronto has some interesting features, especially its city hall - the most exciting and imaginative structure I've ever seen.

It also has weather. Having lived here from 1951 to 1954, I am aware of what it has to offer in this field, especially in the summer. Moist heat that drains all energy. This weekend Toronto is outdoing itself. The worst heat wave in 150 years. Temperature climbing to 100 F, humidity also around 100.

And today I must venture out into it, to check into the Ford Hotel, across from the bus station. This is not the convention hotel (cheapest

room 20 daily). here, for \$3 per day, I get a room with a torn curtain, a sink with a tap that runs constantly, a desk lamp with no globe in it. But there are clean sheets on the bed. I leave most of my luggage behind and go out into the baking streets to collect my suitcase and heavy guitar case from Tam Kearney's place. Tam is an ex-Glaswegian, filksinger and co-owner

of Fiddlers' Green, where I sang a week ago.

By 1.30 I'm at the Royal York, ready to register. Posh hotel, all crystal chandeliers and knee-deep carpets. I start meeting people, among the first Dency Arnold and her son Richard, who have come from one of the midwest states to hawk STAR TREK slides etc. in the hucksters' room. But I discover that in June 1968 they were at Fort Langley, B.C. and saw Pierre Trudeau vault a railing and leap seven feet to the ground to embrace me, after I had sung for him. We agree it's a remarkable coincidence.

Later, another coincidence. I'm standing in the hall, playing the guitar and singing for a small group of people, when a newly arrived member turns, listens, then comes over to me and gets down on his knees. His name is Nate Buckland and we have never met, but his mother heard me sing in Seattle and sent him one of my songs and a description of me, which he recognised instantly. Nate and his wife Carol, along with a drummer, play the cocktail lounges in the (I think) Minneapolis area. He turns out to be an excellent guitarist.

I spy a familiar face rushing past - John Brunner, just arrived from London. "How's the weather over there?"  
"Great." And he's gone.

Riding up the escalator on the way back from coffee, I spot another familiar face in the hall below - Al Debettencourt. I've forgotten his name but remember he is with the American army in Berlin and attended OMPAcon at Easter. He will be here for the whole convention, so there's no rush to speak to him. Nevertheless I go tearing down the up escalator, make a great leap to the floor at the bottom and almost fall. Al observes my exciting arrival. I walk over to him and say casually, "I bet you don't remember me."  
"Oh yes, I do, Vera," he says.  
And I bet he won't forget me in a hurry either.

By seven o'clock I am exhausted and in considerable pain. For the past four months I have been having a bad time with rheumatoid arthritis. I thought it had left me temporarily, but now it's back. (Running down up escalators doesn't help.) So I trade the air-conditioned Royal York for the oppressive heat of the Ford Hotel. My room is hot, noisy. Big lorries run down Bay Street; when I close my eyes they thunder right by my bed. The building shakes. A clock strikes each hour, and I hear them all until midnight.

Friday, 31st. August: I don't know of anybody who has as much trouble telling time as I do. I consistently mistake the long hand for the short hand. And worse. This morning at 3am I wake up, look at my clock and think it says seven o'clock. Reluctantly I get up, take a shower and start getting dressed. My eye falls on the clock and this time I see it correctly. Three o'clock. Back to bed. It takes me an hour to get back to sleep, but I finally make it. Get up again at 7 and answer some letters, then down to the Royal York for the first day of the con.

The opening talk is by Robert Bloch, who was also guest of honour the last time Toronto hosted the convention, 25 years ago. A dark, attractive man with

a kindly face, he is an intelligent and witty speaker. The most frightening thing about him (in spite of PSYCHO and other horror films) is his puns, some of which evoke loud groans.

Jay Jay Klein presents a slide show, shots from previous cons with an amusing commentary.

Then Dorothy Fontana talks about the new STAR TREK production, using animation instead of live actors. They have planned to surprise us by showing the first episode but alas the film hasn't arrived.

During the day I play the piano and lead a song session for an hour, and later give a 1½-hour concert of my own songs in the lounge - both unscheduled events which turn out to be a lot of fun.

Being a vegetarian, I don't attend the special Chinese dinner of about 24 courses, each one featuring meat.

At night tables are set up for a "Meet the Pros" party. Isaac Asimov introduces the writers and crowns them with special straw hats. Unfortunately I'm sitting so far away that even when they are introduced, I can't see their features clearly. It's a big convention - close to 3,000. That's probably why I keep looking for Philip Jose Farmer (who has been described to me) and never find him. I just want to tell him that I think TARZAN ALIVE is a remarkable and tremendously funny book. But he probably knows it anyway.

Towards midnight I hear from Elliott Shorter ( a big negro, about 6'6" and broad) that Gordon Dickson is holding a marathon night-long song-fest in room 7-192. I go to the room. No Gordon Dickson. Just a few people and some guitars. I sing three songs and then drag myself back to the Ford.

Saturday, 1st. September: In the mornings the hucksters' room is open, as is the All Our Yesterdays room (an interesting exercise in nostalgia, including a programme from OMPAcon 73), the Computer Games room, the Bakka Books room, and others, and films are running almost continuously. Today there is also a fan-publishing seminar, which I miss.

At noon the Burroughs Bibliophiles hold a special luncheon and dum-dum at which the feature speaker is Buster Crabbe, star of some early TARZAN films. Members only. I wonder if Crabbe managed to sell them a swimming pool. (That's his present occupation.)

Another familiar face - Malcolm Davies from the Globe, whose plane was delayed seven hours. We greet each other with warm hugs.

In the afternoon Judith Merril (who now lives in Toronto and has presented to the local public library a substantial collection of sf) is to act as moderator for a discussion on Learning to Face Doomsday Without Really Trying.

I arrive early to get a good seat, right up in front, and discover Asimov is only two seats away. He is a chubby teddy-bear of a man with lots of fluffy

grey hair waving around his head. He is thirsty and I'm going to the back to get a glass of ice-water for myself, so I bring one for him. I have overheard him telling the people with him that his self-image is quite different from what appears on the surface, that he sees himself as a sort of Cary Grant. Having written a song on this discrepancy between interior and exterior views, I tell him that inside I too am young and thin and beautiful.

Judy says it is a great pleasure for her to introduce the good doctor. At a previous convention he made some remark about her which she resented. So this afternoon she introduces him as "Isaac Asimov, who has never appeared in one of my anthologies". Ouch!

Asimov is an excellent speaker - knowledgeable, with an easy manner and ready wit. As the keynote speaker, he stresses over-population as the greatest of dangers facing humanity. Following him, Frederik Pohl deals with the politics of survival in space, and Analog editor Ben Bova (dark and handsome, with a friendly approach) speaks on environmental control, specifically weather control. But he doesn't mention hurricane control, which he dealt with in *THE WEATHERMEN*.

The third speaker is Katherine MacLean, whose fiction I don't know, but I find her presentation very impressive. Later we meet at the coffee bar and have a chat. Now I'm anxious to read some of her stories.

After a break for coffee, John Brunner comes up to the podium, looking particularly gorgeous in a mauve ensemble, and delivers the response to all we have heard so far. His final suggestion is that perhaps we need a new religion - one with no heretics, no power struggle, perhaps no faith in the supernatural, but with a scripture. He thinks it strange that such a church does not already exist. Afterwards, people crowd to the mikes to contribute their views. I think of joining them but can't rouse sufficient energy. Instead, I collar John later in the day and tell him there already is such a church and I happen to be a member, and if he wants me to I'll tell him about it later.

I skip the auction and the Georgette Heyer Tea (having read one of her books, I have no inclination to read another) and instead, at 4.30 Bill Steele and I give a joint concert in the lounge - under difficulties, as we have to compete with a talkative group already occupying half the room. Bill is a folksinger/songwriter, formerly of San Francisco, now of Ithaca, N.Y. I had seen him a month earlier at the Mariposa Folk Festival in Toronto, but it was a delightful surprise to find him at the con. Some of his songs are pure sf, and some fanzine editors collared him as soon as we had finished.

At midnight the Robert Bloch film festival begins (after a few introductory puns by the master). I see all of *THE TORTURE GARDEN* and about half of *HOUSE OF BLOOD*, then stumble out to find a taxi and return to the Ford.

Sunday, 2nd. September: This morning, with no regrets, I move my stuff out of the Ford, into a taxi and down to the Royal York. A spacious air-conditioned room with two beds, wall-to-wall carpeting, big bathroom of my own with dozens of fluffy towels - unimaginable luxury! I'm

almost tempted to stay there.

But last night I put a notice on the board advising that there would be a hootenanny in the lounge at 10, and another notice on the lounge door, and a similar notice also appears in the bulletin. So instead of wallowing in expensive living, I make my way to the lounge. Only to find that my watch is more than an hour slow, and everybody has come and gone. Except a few faithful souls who kept checking periodically. We have fun swapping songs until lunchtime.

In the afternoon, a session on Hard Facts Versus Hard Fiction, with David Gerrold (the STAR TREK man) as moderator introducing keynote speaker John Brunner. John is a good speaker, manages to present all sorts of controversial points, and at the end shoots them all down in flames. The respondents are three: Poul Anderson (he has a babyish face which makes him look terribly young to be responsible for all those books), Bob Silverberg (black beard and eyebrows and a sly smile; I think the satanic look is masquerade), and Donald Wollheim (you've seen him at cons in Britain, so you don't need any description).

Then there is a panel of old pros: Fritz Leiber (tall, white-haired, distinguished), Harry Harrison (chubby, bald and moustachioed, bit of a loudmouth but also intelligent and funny), Cliff Simak (a small grey-haired man, thin-faced, warm smile). Then a panel of young pros: Gardner Dozois (tall, with straight hair hanging to his waist, beard ditto); Michael Coney; and Joanna Russ (dark and willowy). Finally a panel of editors: Ben Bova, Terry Carr, Ed Ferman and Ted White.

All of these people have interesting things to say, but unfortunately I don't make a summary of their comments. By five o'clock I am so exhausted I go to bed and don't get up until 8, by which time the Hugo Awards dinner is over. I find a seat on the balcony so I can watch the presentations. Lester del Rey acts as compere and says he learned how from watching Isaac Asimov. "I want to point out to you," he says, "that I have not yet won a Hugo."

Due to a holdup in production of the rockets, the Hugoes are only half there - a base, with an engraved plaque. The winners are assured that the other section will be sent to them shortly.

When the night film session starts at midnight, I watch the Monty Python film, AND NOW FOR SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT. At half past two I crawl into my luxurious bed in my cool quiet room and sleep and sleep. No wonder it's always the poor people who stage revolutions. One more night in the Ford and I would have been ready to join them on the barricades.

Monday, 3rd, September: I get up at 8.30 (much too early, but I have a lot to do) and am too busy to look in on any of the morning activities. I check out at noon. The bill is prepared in about ten seconds flat by a computer - science fiction made reality!

Last official event of the con is a discussion on the Phenomena of Fans and

Fandom, with George Scithers as moderator, keynote speaker Rusty Hevelin and respondent Lester Del Rey. Lester suggests using the profit from a con to publish a fanzine of gripes from fans (limit one page per fan) which would be sent to all members. (I think this would be a waste of money. Let the fans send in their gripes to the people planning the next con; that would be more to the point.) Somebody suggests it would be better to spend all the profit on one big bash to wind up the con. That would be okay, except that the planning committee doesn't find out until the con's over whether they will have a profit or a loss. I think it would be better to return the profit to the people attending on a pro rata mileage basis, so that those travelling farthest would get the biggest share. Or else use it to pay a consultant-advisor who would help the planning committee for each con, so there would be some continuity. This time I do make the effort to get to the mike and make this latter suggestion, and it creates some discussion.

At 3.30 it is all over and Jay Haldeman (author of HERO) and his wife are inviting us to the next worldcon in Washington. The guest of honour there will be Roger Zelazny and the fan guest of honour Jay Jay Klein. In 1975 it will be in Australia, where the guest of honour will be Ursula K. LeGuin and the fan guests of honour Mike and Susan Glicksohn.

Miscellaneous recollections, not dated: David Gerrold auctioning off the first draft of one of his STAR TREK scripts. He types it directly onto butcher paper, not cut in sheets, so it comes out as one long scroll. A woman paid around 50 dollars for it and seemed pleased with her purchase.....On the heels of the news of Tolkien's death, a new set of awards for fantasy was announced, the Gandalfs, to be presented in conjunction with the Hugoes.....A special plaque was presented to an American couple, the Greens, who gave hospitality to many visiting Britishers attending space launches (including our friend Andrew Stephenson).....The first episode of the new (animated) STAR TREK series finally arrived and was shown. I thought it a little better than the show with live actors, and obviously the new format will permit more inventive scripts.....

Speaking of live actors, I haven't mentioned the skit presented by Gardner Dozois and his friends. Fortunately, the details seem to have faded from my mind - all except the sex orgies, which were great fun.....The hotel management received a standing ovation and more than one person remarked that the Royal York had provided better service than any other worldcon hotel.

There were probably a lot of people there I should have mentioned, people such as Jerry Pournelle and Wilson Tucker and Forrest Ackerman and Hal Clement and R.A. Lafferty and many others. If LURK would like to send me to Washington next year as its special representative, I'll try to do a better and more detailed job of reporting.

If LURK won't send me, I'll have to come up with some other scheme for getting to Washington on Labor Day weekend of 1974. And then there's Melbourne on the 14th - 17th August, 1975.

Maybe I won't make it, but I'm going to try.

Malcolm Davies~

## The Talking Greyhound Bus Stop

Blues.

To begin with I had better first explain that this is probably the shortest Worldconrep in the history of fandom. There are two reasons for this: (a) it has to be sent airmail and I must save paper; (b) this is being written at Greyhound bus terminals down the length of the U.S.A.

M Anyhow, to get on with it; I arrived at the con hotel on the Friday even-  
E ing, though the only way I could tell that, after seven hours in the air,  
M was by looking in my diary. Not to be daunted by such things as exhaust-  
P ion, I threw myself into the con, or at least, tried to. The only room  
H party I could find was the Asimov promotion party, and that was breaking  
I up. The reason for this was simple - no booze. This unfortunately was a  
S common complaint, as the hotel was all but dry, and the nearest liquor  
: store was three blocks away.

:  
: Hoping that the morrow would bring something better, I retired, but the  
: night had a few surprises. Just before going to sleep, I decided to play  
: around with the TV. It was one of those cubic jobs with about thirty-  
: seven channels. I was surprised to find, in amongst the Hawaii-Five-Os,  
: F.B.I.s and Untouchables, some English voices. Zeroing in on the station,  
: I found none other than our own MONTY PYTHON. Thus reassured that the  
: Beeb was doing its bit to civilise the colonies, I at last retired.

:  
: The next day I was up with the lark (the British lark, that is) at about  
: 10am. I immediately dashed downstairs to register. Unfortunately, the  
: lady behind the desk had other ideas.

: "Oh," she said, "I appear to have lost my D's."

: "Never mind," I said consolingly, "You lose some of dese, and you gain  
: some of dose."

: "Could you come back in an hour?" she asked, not batting an eyelid.

N  
E So I wandered around for a bit, or tried to. The security guards, a nice  
W enough crowd in themselves, refused to let unregistered personnel into  
O certain areas. This left me with a choice between the snack bar and the  
R men's room. I chose the snack bar, which was one of the few noticeable  
L concessions made to the con by the hotel. However, at the prices they  
E charged, it might have been better to have had no concession at all. By  
the end of the con I think a good many people were eating out and getting

A full meals for the price of a snack.

N  
S Back at the registration desk, they had found the D's, so off I went to  
: explore the con. The timetable seemed to be geared to someone with three  
: bodies, since there was always a film on somewhere, and a speaking sess-  
: ion, in addition to the various side events such as computer games, a  
: Dracula Society exhibit, or various seminars. The main pastime among  
: many of the fans seemed to be sitting around in small groups, talking.

:  
: I decided to see what the artshow was offering, but on my way there I  
: found someone familiar among the fans. It was Vera Johnson, remembered  
: by many for the folk sessions she has led at the past two English cons.  
: We greeted each other heartily, a pair of familiar faces in a sea of  
: strangers. Vera said that she would be doing her thing later that aft-  
: ernoon, but was right now off to watch a film, so we bid farewell and  
: went our separate ways.

:  
M The artshow, even though still growing, was very impressive. Apart from  
I the professional exhibitors, there were many fannish artists, both pain-  
A ters and sculptors. Some of the most interesting work I saw there used  
M the technique of acrylics on black velvet, which caught the effect of  
I deep space perfectly. To the assembled talent I had some of my own to  
: add - my own at least by proxy; half a dozen paintings by a non-fannish  
: friend named Charles Nightingale, who's attempting some sf-style pain-  
: ting. Bjo Trimble said that for only six months work, they were outstan-  
: ding, so you never know, in a few years Britain might have its own Frank  
: Kelly Freas.

:  
: With my job at the artshow done, I went along to the main hall, where  
: Isaac Asimov was speaking on "How to Learn to Face Doomsday Without  
: Really Dying." He was causing quite a stir, an appreciative one, with  
: talk of free love, liberal contraception and I think he even touched on  
: a genetically orientated breeding policy. Fred Pohl, Ben Bova and Kath-  
: erine MacLean all added their thoughts, all of which added up to the  
: fact that there were too many people using too much energy, and unless  
: someone did something about it we were heading for trouble. Our own John  
: Brunner rounded off nicely when he pointed out that as we are dependent  
: on oil, and the Islamic countries hold 90% of the reserves, by the year  
: 2000 we could be living in an Islam-dominated world. (Has anyone done a  
: story like that?)

S  
A In the afternoon I went along to find Vera. Soon a small group of us  
N were singing to Vera's accompaniment. Later a Canadian singer by the  
A name of Bill Steele joined us and introduced us to a few of his own  
N songs on a multitude of subjects. Thus I spent the afternoon singing  
T away, disturbed only slightly by a group of comixfen who persisted in  
O holding a loud conversation throughout all the songs.

N That evening was what must have been the high spot of the con for many  
I -- the Costume Ball. It was a highly polished affair, with all the par-  
O ticipants obviously putting a lot of thought into their costumes, or in

: the case of some of the females, lack of costumes. The most memorable  
: parts for me were the rendering of Dr. Phibes singing "We'll Meet Again",  
: and the U.S.S. ENTERPRISE and a Klingon battle cruiser who had a battle on  
: stage.

L It was after the costume ball that the bar was opened for the first, and  
A last, time.

R  
E That evening I found myself in a room-party where the main topic of con-  
D versation was methods of medieval warfare. The main protagonists were  
O Harry Fisher and Fritz Leiber, who spent hours discussing the merits of  
: the sword against the quarterstaff, and whether anyone would write a good  
: SF story about a naval battle.

:  
: I spent a good deal of the wee hours of Sunday morning trying to stay  
: awake to see all the way through the Robert Bloch Film Festival, which  
: ran to about 4am., therefore I awoke late on Sunday morning. The speakers  
: didn't start till 1pm, so I took in a couple of films - SILENT RUNNING and  
: THIS ISLAND EARTH.

:  
: The main speaker in the afternoon was John Brunner, who spoke in his usual  
: entertaining manner on "Hard Fact is Hard SF". In the course of his speech,  
: he knocked RENDEZVOUS WITH RAMA for lack of original ideas, and SF in gen-  
: eral for writing technique, especially with reference to characterisation.  
: His general argument seemed to be that SF wasn't in the fortune-telling  
: business, but could extrapolate the effects of specific technological de-  
: velopments on society. Robert Silverberg, in reply, said that he thought  
: he was sly and devious, and that the question SF should be asking was  
: "should man survive?", to which he got a resounding "yes" from the aud-  
: ience. He also made the point that any truly futuristic story would be  
: incomprehensible as we would not have any points of reference, and that  
: SF is really about today and not tomorrow.

:  
: At that point I broke away to catch a showing of CAPTAIN MARVEL, the first  
: thirteen episodes. It was a mammoth effort, but well worth it if only to  
: find out who "The Scorpion" was.

A That brought me up to the Hugo awards, a long and drawn out affair that  
L was not really my cup of tea. As I arrived late I was so far away from  
B the proceedings that I could hardly see anything anyway.

E  
Q The main film programme that night included a preview of the new STAR  
U TREK cartoon, which looks like being a winner. I tried to stay up till  
E the last film, NOSFERATU, the original silent DRACULA, but unfortunately  
R the con was beginning to tell, and I didn't make it.

Q  
U The last morning of the con was just as full as the other days. A film  
E programme included THINGS TO COME, albeit a very expurgated version, and  
: also NOSFERATU as it turned out that it hadn't got shown the previous  
: night after all. Most of the morning was spent saying goodbye, looking  
: around exhibits for the last time, and generally tidying up. In the

: afternoon I spent most of my time in a bar with a few Americans. When I  
: got back at 6.30 the con, far from being over, was still in full swing.  
: There were more room parties that night than on any other, or at least,  
: they were noisier. I ended up at around lam being told to vacate the area  
: around the convention floor, where we were having a fannish singalong, as  
: another convention was trying to set itself up.

: So as Torcon 2 sank slowly in the sunset a great many contented fans star-  
: ted to wind their way home. There were many happy memories: the Costume  
: Show; the good films; lively discussions; and the fact that for the first  
: time in living memory the elevators didn't break down. There were a few  
D bad points as well, notably the lack of open bars, and the one thing that  
E spoiled the show for a lot of art fans - the fact that some kind person  
N walked off with a Kelly Freas painting. But all in all it was a good con,  
V or at least I found it so.

E  
R So who's for Australia in '75?

-----  
POSTSCRIPT Well, here I am back in England, this sceptred isle, this green  
jewel set in an azure sea! So I'm homesick, and with good reason.  
I think I must now be qualified to write a book on how NOT to see North Amer-  
ica. Number one thing not to do is to go to a World Science Fiction Convention  
and blow two weeks' money in three days. Number two thing is not to try to stay  
in twenty-dollar-a-night hotels (especially when your daily allowance is 22  
dollars). But on the bright side I met a lot of nice folks, and saw a lot of  
places I would otherwise have missed.

But to the point: on my last night in Canada I went back to the Royal York  
Hotel. It was about midnight and there was a convention going on....of char-  
tered accountants. It's not quite the same: for a start the convention floor  
was empty at 12 o'clock. However, the Worldcon had left its mark! On the 4th.  
floor lift shaft was an "I'm voting for Australia" sticker, and behind the  
washroom door on the convention floor someone had scrawled "Robert Heinlein  
can't grok to save his life". And last but not least, on my way down in the  
lift, I was invited to a room party! Unfortunately I couldn't stop as I was  
off to catch my plane, which thanks to Toronto's cheap and efficient transit  
system, I reached with 45c (18p) in my pocket.

And so off to England to mull over my memories, and replenish my finances in  
preparation for Novacon.

...and

Sheryl Birkhead

adds a looong footnote.

Well, I left Washington D.C. on the Thursday before the con - that's when I found out that there is a real and distinct difference between a flight which is direct and one which is non-stop. For those who don't know, I am petrified of airplanes and use them only as a last resource, which means that my philosophy on flying has been "If the plane stops, I'm getting out". But in this case I didn't have any choice at all. Every single flight into Toronto went via New York. Direct means only that no matter how many millions of stops there are in the middle, the same plane will eventually get you to your (hopefully) desired destination. So....

What I did was to get on board, fasten the seat belt and sit RIGHT THERE for four whole hours! I ignored everyone and everyone ignored me - which allowed sufficient time to come to an at least workable relationship with my stomach. From the moment I get anywhere near an airport, I get this unquenchable sensation that I'm in a dentist's chair, and that's a feeling I don't like. Anyhow, the plane went down at New York, which was suffering a power blow out and we had to sit there because there wasn't electricity to power something or other. Now, I had the opportunity to get off and make a break for freedom, but instead I rechecked the seatbelt and gulped a little deeper.

Well, to make a long story short, we finally made it to Toronto and after some hassles (better left for future re-telling) with the Customs, I got out into the 'cool' air of Toronto. Um, I'd better say that I'd checked around and gotten the average estimate of the temperature in Toronto, and even went out and bought a coat the day before I left. Right - I walked out into well over a hundred degrees (F of course) of 'cool'. I asked the bus driver about this and he only chuckled a little and said that they were breaking records all over for heat - some consolation.

At the con hotel the first person I saw whom I thought I knew was Buck Coulson - and sure enough, it WAS! The Coulsons, good people that they are, had stopped off at Billy Pettit's and brought up my mimeo for me - so I could actually go up and look at/touch it if I wanted to. All that remained was to get someone to bring it back down into the States for me.

My original plans had been to go over to the Canadian National Exhibition that afternoon, but the heat and the plane proved too much - so I just wandered around, got registered and wandered some more. That's when I found there was some 'problem' with my ticket to the Chinese banquet and was funneled over to the 'Problems' desk and met Mike Glicksohn. Mike and Susan don't know it, but (as I'm sure is the case with all BNFs) I've known them for about two or three years; it's the same syndrome as happens in the classroom - you only have one name to remember, but the teacher can't possibly be expected to know all umpteen names at first. The same thing goes for Mike and Susan - I'd seen them on panels and in programs for quite a while, so I already knew them.

That night's dinner foray went up to a Spaghetti Mill, but the 45 minute wait proved to be too much for starving fans, and we adjourned to a small German place and ate - plus carted out some doggie bags!

(M(Doggie bags? My ~~PPP~~ God! Hot doggies, I presume??)M)

Friday I did go to the Exhibition, only to find that it was too hot for the cattle and most of them had gone home - only the people were still waiting around!

Now - True Confessions time - I didn't see a whole lot of the program - in fact only bits and pieces. I did see Susan Glicksohn's pride and joy, the ALL OUR YESTERDAYS room, and am still awed by the color of former zines and the wealth of fannish history stored right there!

I did (of course) get into the art show and was disappointed that there wasn't any Kirk stuff there, but still managed to enjoy it very nicely. I can only hope that the Freas painting which was taken is found and returned.

Okay - True Confess number 2 - I don't party much - heck, any at all! So, I can only say that if the number of people who didn't make it up for breakfast is any indication of the revelry the night before - wow, it must have been some kind of a party con!!!

The Masquerade was nice - what I could see of it - but there weren't too many entries. I don't know if anything at all can be done about being able to see, but I personally couldn't see most of the time and for some of the entries will have to wait and ask for photos to see what they really looked like.

One thing the concom did which I really liked was the showing of all the Hugo dramatic presentation nominations. It's true that I only got to see SLAUGHTERHOUSE FIVE and five minutes of SILENT RUNNING, but the idea is GOOD. But, a bigger room ought to be used for that section of the film show if possible. I missed out on SILENT RUNNING because the guy in front of me stood up - he couldn't see - so of course I ended up not being able to see and....

The Chinese banquet was most enjoyable. I would have liked it to be a bit more leisurely, but under the crowded doing-business circumstances I understand that the best possible job was done and carried out without undue trouble.

To sum it all, the con was huge. For me, it was a chore to try to face so many people - but that's just me. I did (naturally) miss most of the people I later found out had been there and whom I wanted to see. I did meet a lot of fans though, and had a darned good time. The Bowers stopped to talk a bit about pubbing, and gave me some ideas plus suggestions of what I'll be running on my mimeo once I get the mechanics of running it figured out. Yes, mighty nice people!

One last note: the concom did a tremendous job and the hotel was almost unbelievable in the way they handled everything. I can only compare Torcon 2 with Noreascon and LACon and can easily say that things went a whole lot smoother than I've ever seen before. Even the elevators (while understandably a bit slower than desired) weren't all that hard to find, and there were stairs right there for those who got too impatient.

So, tired and swamped by the kindness of the people I had met, Torcon 2 drifted away, but then again, there's always DISCON II !!!!!



From the new we go to the old, for the "Astounding-Analog Reader" pair are only the first part of a series planned to cover the history of the magazine, and only get as far as 1946. The first book has seven stories, dated 1937 to 1941. The two latest are the well-known and over-anthologised "Nightfall" and "By His Bootstraps". The other five, though, are little-known stories, mainly by first generation authors like Raymond Z. Gallun and Ross Rocklynne. They may represent the best of the period, but the competition wasn't great. They are all very outdated and probably best forgotten.

The second book deals with the next four years, and it is immediately apparent that the so-called "golden age" had arrived. There are eight stories; Simak's "City", Van Vogt's "The Storm", Leinster's "First Contact" and Brown's "Placet is a Crazy Place" have all received their due recognition. There are also two lesser-known classics; Bertram Chandler's "Giant Killer" and C.L. Moore's "Vintage Season". Even the remaining pair are above average.

The editors provide very readable introductions to the book as a whole, and to each batch of three stories. The books themselves, though, are probably of real interest only to the fan who is interested in sf history.

NEBULA AWARD STORIES 8: Ed. Isaac Asimov: Gollancz: 287pp: £2.50

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?: Ed. Isaac Asimov: Michael Joseph: 415pp: £3.75

Another hardy annual on the anthologies scene is the "Nebula Award" series. As usual, no. 8 contains the three winners and a few of the other nominees. This is a far better idea than that used by the Hugo award anthologies, where only the winners are published - often several years after they won.

The lead story in the collection is the winning novella, Arthur Clarke's "A Meeting with Medusa". Two years old now, it is probably well-known to most readers. Briefly though, the story concerns a "balloon" exploration of the upper reaches of Jupiter's atmosphere, and the wildlife found there. The story is Clarke at his proficient best. There is no exceptional brilliance to it, but just a well-thought, interesting story line, told in his own inimitable style.

The short story award went to Joanna Russ' "When it Changed", a quiet, unassuming tale of the confrontation between an all-male space expedition and an all-female planet. Again there is nothing spectacular - no fantastic plot twist - but just good solid writing, that there is so little of these days. It is only unfortunate that Joanna does not write more often, as the genre needs her stories.

The third award - novelette - went, like the Hugo, to Poul Anderson's "Goat Song". It is yet another story with his curious blend of myth and science, that won him both awards last year with "Queen of Air and Darkness". This story is the weaker of the two, suffering somewhat from its stilted prose. Of the three winners, it is the least deserving.

The remaining stories are generally of a high quality as well. William Rotsler presents an exceptionally good 'first story', entitled "Patron of the Arts". As one might expect it is about the development of art in the future, and in particular about one artist. The quality of the story, though, lies in its portrayal of the patron of the title. Bob Silverberg offers another notable story, "When We Went to See the End of the World", about a party of people, each of whom has been to see the end of the world, and each of whom has seen something different.

Briefly, the remaining three consist of an amusing tale from Fred Pohl; an uncharacteristically poetic fantasy about a unicorn from Harlan Ellison; and Gene Wolfe's obscurely bizarre "Fifth Head of Cerberus". Asimov contributes quite an interesting article about the economics of sf, but, sadly, ruins it by talking of himself as the world authority - a little big-headed even for Asimov - because of his awards for "The Gods Themselves". It is sad that the committee let themselves be swayed by emotion in the selection, as the book was nowhere near good enough.

In contrast the Good Doctor is back at his inventive best in "Where do We Go from Here?" Convinced that science fiction has great potential as a teaching device, he has picked out seventeen stories - some very well-known, others rather more obscure - which he thinks should inspire curiosity about some aspect of science. Following each story is a brief summary of the scientific concepts mentioned within, with comments on their validity. Then there is a short list of brief questions, intended to guide the student's thoughts along useful lines, and finally an appendix containing a couple of books per story for further study.

For example, one of the questions following Clarke's "The Deep Range" is: "If mankind learns to harvest and process krill, what would happen to the great whales?", and one is referred to a book by E. J. Slijper entitled "Whales".

Because of these features, the anthology is fascinating, and strongly to be recommended. Don't be put off if you're not the student type, though; there are many good stories here which are worth reading anyway.

Other recent anthologies:

SCIENCE FICTION HALL OF FAME VOLS I & II: ed. Robert Silverberg: Sphere: 349 & 351pp: 40p each.

A reprinted edition of this collection of the best sf short stories of all time, as voted by the Science Fiction Writers of America. Very good selection of 26 stories, some not too common.

BEYOND CONTROL: ed. Robert Silverberg: Sidgwick & Jackson: 220pp: £1.95

Unusual collection of seven old, little-known, but good stories. Worth reading, but not worth buying.

THE PENGUIN SCIENCE FICTION OMNIBUS: ed. Brian Aldiss: 616pp: 60p.

The three classic Aldiss/Penguin anthologies merged into one giant edition. A total of 36 good stories at such a price make this an excellent bargain for anyone who did not get the original trio.

POSSIBLE TOMORROWS: ed. Groff Conklin: Coronet: 192pp: 35p.

A collection of five stories, consisting of Asimov's "The Dead Past" and four other rare but quite good stories. Worth a read at least.

THE SPACE-TIME JOURNAL: ed. Judith Merril: Panther: 206pp: 30p.

Very poor selection of 21 "New Wave" stories and poems. Little to recommend it.

((Phil looks at some more of the current flood of anthologies next issue.))

SEEN ~~ON~~ ~~THE~~ ZINE SCENE

Genzines received, with brief comments by Mike. Again, rather old hat I'm afraid - will try to catch up next time.

BLUNT 2 (62pp/A4/Mim): Bob Smith et al., Selene, 131 Coxtie Green Road, Brentwood, Essex, CM14 5PT. The usual or 20p.

Very fannish, with stuff about fan-groups, fan-art etc. Plenty to read, very neat, but a bit unrelaxed. Rating: 7

KWALHIOQUA 8 (46pp/US4to/Mim): Ed Cagle, Route 1, Leon, KS 67074, U.S.A. The usual or 50c.

All sorts of odds and sods in here, mostly short, the whole being flavoured with yed's offbeat sense of humour. Impossible to describe. Rating: 7

CYPHER 10 (56pp/A4/Mim): James Goddard, Plovers Barrow, School Road, Nomansland, Salisbury, Wilts. 20p.

Best item is a conversation between Aldiss and Blish - very good, but the rest is pretty turgid this time around. Some good artwork. Rating: 5

MALFUNCTION 4 (16pp/4to/Mim): Pete Presford, 10 Dalkeith Road, South Reddish, Stockport, SK5 7EY, Cheshire. The usual.

The best issue yet. All good grimy fun in here, though it probably wouldn't seem half as good if it was spelt and laid out properly. See, Pete - nice words even though you panned LURK. Don't it make you feel ashamed? Rating: 8

MADCAP 3 (60pp/4to/Mim): Pete Presford & Pete Colley (address above). A show of interest, or 25p.

A good try, with three interior colours, some lithoed art and a reasonable layout - but the material ain't worth it. Best things are Alan Hunter's INTRODUCTION TO COMICS and Phil Payne's book reviews. Plenty of ghastly poetry, of course. Rating: 3

SFINX 8 (28pp/A4/Litho): Kevin Smith, Oriel College, Oxford. 15p.

High quality amateur fiction zine. Authors this time are Ian Watson, Kevin Smith, Rob Holdstock, Allan Scott and Chris Morgan. Almost professional standard in layout. You should look at this. Rating: 6

THE ALIEN CRITIC 6 (80pp/ $\frac{1}{2}$ US4to/Litho): Richard E. Geis, Box 11408, Portland, OR 97211, U.S.A. In U.K. from Wm. Dawson & Sons Ltd., Cannon House, Folkestone, Kent. £1.98 per year - 4 issues.

Much of the magic has gone, I'm afraid, but there are some good bits in here if your eyes will stand the small type. With the increased emphasis on sf here, LOCUS becomes less and less essential, especially as they're cutting down on fan news. Rating: 6

BREAKTHROUGH 1 (12pp/US4to/Mim): Henry Bitman, P.O. Box 968, Azusa, CA 91702, U.S.A. Free.

New sercon zine from someone I've never heard of. Can't get into this at all. Rating: 3

GEGENSCHWEIN 11 (24pp/4to/Mim): Eric Lindsay, 6 Hillcrest Avenue, Faulconbridge, NSW 2776, Australia. The usual.

Just editorial, zine reviews and letters this time. Nice reading though. Ken Ozanne looks promising as zine reviewer. Rating: 6

((Still a big backlog, but a real blitz next time....promise!))

THE PIPERCOLUMN

a column (or pipe)

by

DAVID C. PIPER (aged 34)

entitled

'YOSSARIAN IS GOD!'

or

'DOG VOMIT BLUES'

or

'DRY HEAVES IS ONE REACTION, I GUESS'



I got a letter the other day from the Credit Controller (Export) of a very large electrical company. Said company has an Italian sounding name (and, no, he wasn't making me an offer I couldn't refuse....even if he did sound as if his mouth was packed with crab-apples) (a la Orr) (Oh Yeah! It's gonna be one of those pieces full of esoteric literary allusions!) (Or p'raps not) (Depends if I can think of any more esoteric literary allusions) and is situated Up T'North. The first paragraph of this letter read thusly:-

"You will have received from us recently a statement of your account as at 31 August 73, reflecting a balance due to us of £90,460-12 against which we have received the settlement of an invoice for £16-32, leaving a balance owing of £90,443-80."

Now, I dunno how that strikes you, but it struck me as hilarious. So hilarious in fact that I just had to phone him up to congratulate him on such a fabulous first para, and also to thank him sincerely for brightening my whole day. So I did. Trouble is, I can only assume I caught him on one of his bad days, because he somehow didn't seem to fully appreciate my, obvious, hilarity and admiration for his literary flair....in fact, to be terribly truthful, he didn't seem to get it at all. I fear that I realised too late that it was not a deliberate juxtaposition of words and figures but that the man was serious.

We parted on less than amiable terms....especially after I had pointed out to him in no uncertain terms that until he answered my query as regards the ridiculously inflated CPA he was charging us on the contract his next letter to me might just as well be a simple repeat of this one. But that was only after I'd tumbled that he wasn't the fun guy I'd assumed he was at first.

I got another letter on another day from a guy who was threatening us with cessation of supply and throwing the spectre of legal action at us due to non-payment of an invoice. I phoned him up and explained, in my usual friendly, fun-loving, good-egging jokey way, that we couldn't pay his invoice dated

June on account of:-

- a) we never got the invoice
- b) the goods haven't yet even been sent to New Zealand
- c) reason they hadn't been sent was because his firm had not yet applied for shipping instructions
- d) and they hadn't replied to our last 4 letters requesting shipping instructions and invoices.



He then, in an irate voice, forcefully yelled at me as to why we hadn't replied to his last 6 letters requesting payment of the invoice with the information I had just imparted to him.

Now, to be honest, I couldn't remember actually having letters from him before.... but then I usually chuck statements away anyway,...but I thought that this was just too good an opportunity to miss so I rejoined, in a friendly way I assure you, with this rejoinder:-

"Well, probably we aren't replying to your letters on account of you aren't replying to ours!"

He, to put it mildly, wasn't amused and we parted on less than aimiable grounds.

Now, I'm starting to get just a leettle worried as to my chosen career (if one can use such a term, specially in mixed company) and to my suitability to any form of business-like employment. I just don't seem to be able to generate the right attitude and seriousness which seems to be a pre-requisite these days for a Civil Servant.



Watch the back page of Exchange & Mart for a 'Position Wanted' ad. from an under-educated, under-ambitious, over-weight and middle-aged dead-beat from Ruislip.

Why (?), I'd probably even walk dogs.

(There now, I knew, just knew I'd be able to get in at least ONE more esoteric literary allusion!!)

= = = = =

((There'll be more from Dave, next issue.))

# THEM LETTERHACK BLUES

by  
DON ALLEN  
and  
MIKE MEARA

A song to the tune of WORRIED MAN BLUES (well, almost)

E A -

I sat at the typer with the mail all piled up high but when I hit that typer my

A E

bombed out mind was dry I need some inspi-ration so come light fuse God I

B<sup>7</sup> D<sup>b7</sup> B<sup>7</sup> E

got 'em I got the l'hck blues

I sat down at the typer with the mail  
all piled up high.  
But when I hit that typer, my bombed-  
out mind was dry.  
I need some inspiration, so come and  
light my fuse.  
Yeh God I got 'em, I got the letter-  
hack blues.

The faneds they all told me, with  
their crosses in the box  
That this is your last issue, if we  
don't get no locs.  
So here it is on pay day, and they  
ain't had their dues.....

I've been a fan for years and years,  
and used to loc with ease  
'Most ev'ry zine that came my way,  
and always tried to please.  
But now I just can't do it, cause the  
gassia's clogged my flues.....

And when at last I get to that Great  
Fanmeet in the sky,  
Saint Pete'll call me over, and he'll  
tell me with a sigh:  
"Next time around you'll be a pro, and  
that sure ain't good news". .....

owhere THE wind from nowhere the WIND from nowhere the wind FROM nowhere the wind from NOWHERE

Readers' response to the last issue, with comments by ((Mike)).

= =

PAUL SKELETON,  
25 Bowland Close,  
Offerton,  
Stockport,  
Cheshire, SK2 5NW.

That was a rat trick you played there in the letter column, Mike old buddy, chum!! I'm bugged if I can remember what I said about Catholics, but I'm sure it could only have been an expression of my disgust in connection with the subject matter you did print, that is:- I'm disgusted that the Catholic church should take the stand it does regarding birth control, and I'm equally disgusted with the Catholic majority who, whilst against the stand personally, haven't the gumption to stand on their own two feet and demand that the Church take a realistic approach to the whole thing. I can't understand this phoney dual sense of values. There are no unnatural methods of birth control. Man is a part of Nature, not apart from Nature, hence any methods he comes up with (!!!) must be natural, no matter how sophisticated. Anyway, either birth control is morally wrong or it isn't. It can't be morally wrong one way, and morally right another. Surely, if birth control is morally wrong, it is just as wrong to deliberately have intercourse during a period in which one knows (cross your fingers) that conception cannot occur? Surely God's will is thwarted just as positively as if one had taken precautions?

Even the idea that God provided the safe period as a concession to sex-maniacs doesn't stand up to the fact that man's knowledge of the safe period must be "unnatural" in that it required "unnatural" practices (science) to provide this sure knowledge.

((I hadn't thought of that last point before, but it seems fairly valid. I agree with you entirely on this subject; however, you didn't mention abortion as a method of birth control, and here my views are much less clear. I'm not going to go into it, as it's been discussed at length and with some heat in MOEBIUS TRIP, but it's certainly a tricky point. Getting back to contraception, it seems to me that we should set aside these delicate moral points, and have a good look at the situation facing us; there are just too many damn people on this planet, whether the population explosion is declining or not, and in order to feed them we're having to run the risk of messing up the environment with fertilisers, pesticides and what have you. If people can't control their urges (and I see no reason why they should) then the least they can do is recognise and accept their social responsibility to their fellow human beings.

I apologise if I "dropped you into the shit" - it wasn't intentional!))

ARCHIE MERCER,  
21 Trenethick Parc,  
Helston,  
Cornwall,  
TR13 8LH.

You seem to have got into the habit of asking me specific things (and then not necessarily quoting me on the subject after all....). This time you ask for the case pro-tobacco. Well, for one thing, insects don't like it, so if it's summer and you're insect-ridden, if you (or a few of you if there's a crowd) light up, the little Bs will soon take their perishing entomological selves off. That may be a lightweight argument - a considerably stronger one is that smoking helps to keep one's weight down, and thus it can in paradoxical fact help to promote health. Again, there are six hundred and seventy-nine other positions ways of keeping weight

down. In the long run, probably the only really effective one is sheer self-discipline. To those who smoke, smoking is far more pleasant!

But surely the principal thing in favour of smoking is that it promotes happiness. It makes it easier to tolerate the stresses and strains of life. If it shortens that life - well, it could reasonably be argued that sixty middling-to-good years are far preferable to seventy middling-to-poor ones. I have never partaken of any form of tobacco (other than the smoke of others, as you point out) since my birth. I realise full well that were I to have smoked, I would all along have found life far more tolerable, been less bored, more willing to accept what came rather than moan that it was "this" and not "that".

(I still think it's a filthy habit, though!)

Finally, I must express my natural curiosity over the identity of Harry Harrison's allegedly praiseworthy narrative about sexual intercourse, on account of which somebody unidentified offered him some liquid aphrodisiac.

((For those of you who don't know or can't remember what Archie's going on about in his last paragraph, allow me to quote from part two of THE CHESSMAN-CON INTERVIEW, last issue, in which Harry Harrison was talking about his happiest moment in sf: "...I couldn't get out of the bar because chaps were buying me drinks and they liked my story. "Oh Harry, it's a good fucking story, have a fucking drink", you know...." The book in question is presumably STONEHENGE, which I haven't read, but they say some of those ancient rites were pretty X-certificate stuff....))

PAMELA J. BOAL,  
43 Hawthorne Crescent,  
Grove,  
Wantage,  
Berks. OX12 7JD.

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I suspect that those who rant and rave against cars are young, or at least fit and comparatively near reasonable public transport. We can't afford our car, and I regret adding to pollution, but life without it would be intolerable for me. I hope that the motor industry will see the present fuel crisis as a real threat to their existence, and step up research into non-polluting transport.

Death and accidents on the road are a social problem; it is people who drive carelessly, it is people who do not see that their cars are properly maintained. It is people who cross roads carelessly or allow their dogs to run free in traffic. Some roads, some weather conditions add to the accident rate, but by far the majority of accidents are caused by people. Why? No doubt you can give as many of the stock answers as I can, but the very basic reason has yet to be found. I suspect that if you took all private vehicles off the road, not only would accidents involving public transport rise, but also accidents in the home and in places of entertainment.

((You seem to be suggesting that some sort of "death-wish" is involved here. Certainly if one looks at the way some people drive, this must be the only explanation, and it is certainly remarkable how a sane and controlled person can become completely different behind the wheel of a car. It is difficult to see, though, how this supposed death-wish could find expression in the home or in places of entertainment. All I get are none-too-serious visions of hundreds of punters flinging themselves under the hooves of racehorses, suffragette-style, with each race becoming a kind of Grand National as piles of bodies littered the racecourse!))

IAN R. BUTTERWORTH,  
29 Larkhill Road,  
Cheadle Hulme,  
Cheadle,  
Cheshire,  
SK8 5QW.

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At several points in the lettercol you mention cars, giving the impression that you see them as things of beauty rather than the gross polluters they are. We know how many people kill themselves in cars, we also know how many non-motorists get knocked down and killed each year. That is discounting the people killed by the fumes. There is nothing to suggest that non-smokers are killed

by the smoke from other peoples' cigarettes, so why not ban the motor car instead of the cigarette?

((I'm sorry to have to tear you to pieces, but you really should be more careful what you write before writing it. If you read my comment on Roger Waddington's letter in the last issue, you'll see that I regard cars as a necessary evil. Certainly the average family saloon is by no means a thing of beauty, but, as in most fields of human endeavour, there have been several examples which could be considered art-ful, over the years. Secondly, recent research has shown that the amount of second-hand cigarette smoke inhaled by non-smokers can be equivalent to smoking up to five cigarettes a day, which certainly isn't going to help one to live longer, is it? Thirdly, since efforts are now being made to reduce atmospheric pollution from car exhausts, shouldn't smokers be making the same sort of effort - by wearing plastic bags over their heads, for instance? A more serious solution would be to replace cigarettes by nicotine spray-inhalers, whereby the addict could keep his habit to himself, and not spread it around for all and sundry to enjoy - or otherwise.))

MARY LEGG,  
(address unknown,  
but it's no longer Oxford.)

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And to think I gave away my EAGLE annual in 1970 when we moved! The DAN DARE episode in it was the one with the exploding Space Academy statuettes. Yes, they were coloured - don't you recall there were at least two gaily coloured characters in it, a green one and a purple one?

Which reminds me of the time Keith Bridges went to a fancy-dress as a Sirian dustman. He had painted himself to the waist with a purple substance before the Oxford con. It so happened that the Bridges were going to pick us up from my mother's at Banbury (this was before we moved to Oxford) but arrived while we were out. My niece and nephew (also visiting) were playing in the garden when the Bridges arrived, and came rushing in the back door shouting "there's a purple man in the garden", just as Keith got to the front door and knocked. Mum went to open the door, saying to the children "What romancing!", opened it and there was Keith, all purple! We asked her what she thought, and she said "Oh, I'm used to Mary's friends!" Even to this day, the kids enquire about the purple man when I see them. What their schoolfriends make of Aunty Mary's way of life, I hate to think!

((That sounds like something out of the script of a low-budget sf movie! But why a dustman? And how? A pity we only met briefly at the con - I don't think I saw you at all, other than on the registration desk. And I didn't recognise you - you didn't look at all as I expected. I shall say no more and leave you wondering!))

ERIC BENTCLIFFE,  
17 Riverside Crescent,  
Holmes Chapel,  
Cheshire,  
CW4 7NR.

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A couple or so thoughts do come to mind which I should most probably have aired in that previous letter...the one which seems to have engendered a fair amount of comment. There were other differences in that Good Old Fannish Fandom of the Fifties; mundane 'pressures'

which, in retrospect, obviously had a great deal of influence on it becoming a fannish era. (There wasn't any fannishness around before then, either, Gray). First off let us recall that those were happier days...more peaceful days, the second World War was over, so was rationing, the prospects for the future looked good. Or at least, they looked better than they had been and it must be realised that the BNFs and actifon of the so-called Golden Age had all lived through the war and were (like everyone else) relieved that it was all over. Many of them had been in the forces and living through WWII whether in uniform or at home wasn't nice...much worse than having read about it, for instance. So...they wanted to enjoy life, the climate was right for enjoying life, they hadn't much money, they hadn't a lot in the way of material things but they had a hobby and they were going to enjoy it.

Another factor was maturity - and before anyone leaps widdershins this way let me say that no, I don't necessarily equate age with maturity but I do equate it with age plus upbringing plus the mores of that age you are upbrung in. The majority of fans of that era came into fandom at a later period in life than the fans of today and they'd also had to mature quicker because of the times they had lived through. The majority, again, had not the lengthy education of the fans today, the lengthy leisurely education. Most had left school at 14 or 15, worked until they were called-up into the forces and quickly had to work again after demob to support their addiction to s-f (and more mundane vices!) They'd had to mature fast. So...they had a hobby, they were in the main, mature, they realised that a hobby was to be enjoyed, that fandom was a place in which to have fun, and they did. It wasn't easy, but it was fun...you had to use imagination because oft times you couldn't afford the processes that eliminated that need. Gestetner and Company learned that fandom was doing things that they shouldn't have been able to do with their machines! And, perhaps because once you have learned to use your imagination you keep on using it, imagination in writing and extrapolation of mad ideas as well as in mind-over-duper (or flatbed).

Obviously, the current wave of fandom grew up in a completely different atmosphere and a different type of fandom had to evolve. I recall a few years back going to an exhibition of 11/12 year old art; the overriding impression gained from it was of imminent doom...atomic explosions were prominently featured, the colours were somorous and gloomy. Bad news is news and it was (and is) obvious that mass media (never before so powerful) was having a considerable effect on the minds of that and similar age groups. Whether most of the late teens and early-twenty year olds realise it or not they have been literally brainwashed into believing that this world of ours is a foul and pestilent place and that armageddon is probably due any moment. Any wonder that there's a lack of wit and humour??? That much U.K. 'fannish' output consists of pretentious 'poetry' sad in style and content??? It takes a hell of an acute sense of humour to stay cheerful in the face of so much 'bad news'...we had optimism to help us.

Possibly, the cure for fandom's ills (mainly U.K. fandom's - in the States there's been a greater continuity of fannishness) is to ban the T.V., burn all papers before reading, and to look around a little more at the good things in life. There are plenty...no other era has had so much inherent opportunities and this is probably obversely reflected by the theme of today - PROTEST. That's a thing you can't have from so many throats unless they have somewhere comfortable to shout from. Which may be cynical, but happens to be true.

There are hints of a fannish revival...could this be, I wonder, because having got embroiled in fandom with its continual thud through the letter box of 'interesting mail', mass media are taking a back seat?

((Anything that helps to shed more light on the reasons behind the Golden Age (majority vote, I think) must be welcome, and your loc/article (I note and accept your rebuke) is quite illuminating. However, I don't altogether share your views on the 'younger generation': the fact is that the world is a foul and pestilent place, almost anywhere you look, not of itself, but because of what we have done to it, and are still doing to it. It is not so much a question of brainwashing as one of awareness of the criminal things some people will do towards one end - making money. This is the reason for all the protesting, and it is up to those who are able to do so to shout long and loud until things get done. The mass media could do a great deal more towards revealing the truth, but sadly, vested interests too often decree otherwise.))

PHILIP PAYNE, I was startled to find Mary Legg preferred 'Letter from America' to 'Uneasy Rider' - proves I'm not an article writer by inclination. In many ways I wish neither had been published in the first place - it was a neo's view of published glory. The time I had in the States was one of the best in my life for a hundred reasons, none of which I can really communicate via the written word. I can quite appreciate Sheryl Birkhead's and Harry Warner's objections thereby. I hate being a tourist, and 'Uneasy Rider' was about me being a tourist, so naturally it didn't turn out too well. Harry has the right idea; it was the people I met at the camp, in the bars and on the road that made me like the place a lot. One of the best times was when I was hitch-hiking around from the camp, and meeting a fascinating number of fascinating people. So my apologies to all the American readers; the fault was in my pen, not in your country.

((Nicely put. But at least the pair of articles you did get you quite a bit of response, even if most of it was negative. And some people actually liked 'em, don't forget!))

GRAHAM POOLE, Regarding camps etc. I'm sure it would be a good thing for children as well as adults to get out into the countryside for a bit (of scenery). I haven't had much experience (of camps) and have only been camping once, this year in July in the Lake District. I'd passed my driving test just three days before and we'd have had to have hitch-hiked otherwise.

Whether this was a good thing (we saw a lot more countryside and travelled further faster) or a bad thing (no sense of battling against the environment, or a oneness with nature) I don't really know. If I hadn't any worries about cash and other mundane things I wouldn't mind dropping out for a while into the countryside (such as remains of it) and really seeing nature. I'd love to take a camera along to capture all its beauty. The scenes of Edward G. Robinson's death in "Soylent Green" where he watches the film of Earth's past beauty, parts of several of the "Planet of the Apes" series and the opening shots in "2001" I think are brilliant examples of cinematography capturing nature and I thrill whenever I see that sort of thing. To see nature, beautiful nature even in those desert scenes is like reading science fiction - a sense of awe, of complete relaxation, comes over you. During our journeying I was driving along as the sun was setting over distant peaks. We were just

passing Eskdale when we saw the sky was a shade of salmon pink, deepening all the time, and the clouds were reflected in the waters of the lake. In the foreground sheep and cattle grazed contentedly and in the very same instant of confronting such beauty I just had to brake to a halt and catch my breath. I got my cine camera out and tried to record it for posterity but it didn't come out the same. But no amount of time will ever erase that moment from my life... not even my hopeless memory.

((People are odd. Go to any well-known 'beauty-spot' in the height of summer, and you will see acres of cars, with people sitting in them, some without even the windows open. Why do so few of them bother to get out and walk around a bit? Man, the only creature with an awareness of his place in the scheme of things, seems to prefer to set himself apart from it - and therein lies disaster.))

DAVE ROWE (again), For the last five issues, LURK seems to have been Brit's  
8 Park Drive, most promising fnz. With no. 5, I felt that some of that  
Wickford, 'promise' should be fulfilled...and wasn't. (Does this  
Essex, sound 'hard'? I hope not!) The layout is fine, simple and  
SS12 9DH. unexperimental - personally I like it and hope you won't  
start using inside illos unless they're of very good quality. The headings are getting neater, as you get used to stencil cutting, but somewhat small and a little too plain. An 'outline' heading would in fact look better, but they're a little more difficult to use, as you have to line up two guide-stencils instead of one.

The main 'fault' with LURK is its written content, which is usually average, good or 'ho-hummy' (as Pete Roberts puts it). There's rarely anything really 'exciting' in there. I earnestly suggest you write round to some of the best-known fan-writers to get some material. By this I don't mean Boak, Williams, Maule, ~~Boyle~~ etc., I mean the pros and abroad-fen (U.S. especially). I also scout the locals; if a person can write a good loc it seems probable he'll write a good article.

((No, it doesn't sound hard - in fact I agree entirely; LURK started off quite well, and has got little better, except for the lettercol, which I'm quite pleased with, and which is the bit of the zine I enjoy doing most. I think LURK reflects our personalities in that it is an easygoing type of zine - and therein lies the trouble; to produce a good genzine you have either to have good contacts, personal friendship type contacts, with a lot of prolific writers, or else a forceful, persistent nature of the type which can get blood from a stone - or contribs from a stranger. We fit into neither of those types, which is why we're folding LURK and going for a more personal type of zine, for which contribs will be welcome, but not solicited.))

SHERYL L. BURKHEAD, I must say that the few Anglozines (such a word exists?)  
23629 Woodfield Road, I've seen seem to run a higher average quality-wise  
Gaithersburg, than American zines. Good, clear, legible repro, nicer  
MD 20760, U.S.A. paper, and so on. I wonder how the production expenses compare?

By the way - about Dave Rowe's letter - saw a cartoon of the Pioneer 10 sitting on some planet, with a pair of people staring at the plaque: "Yes, they look just like people...except they don't wear any clothes".

((That's interesting, because from this side of the pond I would have to say exactly the same thing about American zines! It's probably because only the bigger and better products of each country actually find their way across the water. Certainly in the fanzine review columns of LOCUS there are titles which I've never seen over here, and I suspect that most other people haven't either, except maybe Pete Weston and Pete Roberts, who I should imagine get a lot more zines than most other U.K. fans. I got the impression, from a couple of things Dick Geis said <sup>in</sup> REG, that production costs are lower where you are; U.K. fans would pay 70p - £1 per ream for quarto paper, 3p - 6p per stencil, £1 - £1.50 per lb. tube of ink, roughly speaking. Internal postage would be 5p or 8p, first class, for a zine of about this size.))

TOM ROBERTS,  
Dept. of English,  
University of Connecticut,  
Storrs,  
CT 06268, U.S.A.

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Well, where the hell have I been, eh? You write in July and I answer in November. Buried in fanzines, for one thing; I have now received upwards of 35 different titles and am only a little over halfway through reading and loocing them. They came in an avalanche which buried me.

But I have not forgotten the proposal to have British zines collected in some archive, and our librarian and I have been intermittently busy at getting things straightened out. He is perfectly happy to get the zines, but we made some investigations and discovered that there may be other libraries already collecting them. These were rumors we were dealing with and I won't bore you with all the details of our investigation: the result is that apparently there is not any other library collecting the zines systematically. A copy of SPECULATION which arrived a month or so ago mentioned the proposal of someone in England to collect the zines. I can see that the idea of having the collection in England might appeal especially to British faneds, but the offer to collect them in our library still stands.

LURK 3 and 4 arrived in good condition, and I have read LURK 4 carefully and with pleasure. The James White speech is great fun, and the issue as a whole is impressive if sometimes a little mysterious. Let me expand on that last point with a full-fledged theory of the British fanzine.

To an outsider like myself - new to fanzines, and American - your zine is like a creature which moves and breathes and has its being in three or four different kinds of space at the same time. There is the sercon space - which I can see and understand - as represented by the White speech and the transcription of the tape of a discussion with sf writers and the reviews (which I like because they are long enough for me to get an impression of the book and of the reviewer). Here, LURK seems steadily serious and responsible and not so extravagant as some other zines I have been reading. Then there is the apa space, of which I am totally ignorant. There is also the fandom space, in which knowledge of the personalities involved is essential, and some awareness of the history of their relations with one another. I am slowly beginning to feel my way into all of this by means of the letters and the other fanzines I have been reading and some very nice long letters from the faneds which I have been receiving - including your own. Add to these spaces the business of editing a fanzine in some vague kind of competition with other zines from England and the United States. That involves one in questions of typography and writing and methods of duplication and appears in the editorial and in the locs. I find myself beginning to have opinions on these matters, too, though they remain

fairly distant. Finally, there is the fanzine as a personal letter from its editors, which appears most prominently in the editorial in this issue but also in parenthetical replies to the locs. For some reason I like this aspect of the zine very much even though I know very little about you and Pat; there are a few American faneds whom I simply dislike.

How do you make judgements on a creature which is living in several 'dimensions' which you do not inhabit yourself? I don't know. And so LURK and other zines I have read are always slightly intelligible and slightly unintelligible. My own impression of British zines as compared with the American counterparts is that the writing is almost always better but that it maintains a steady goodness which does not so often rise to something superior. The American fanzines almost always have something in them which is so godawful it would never appear in the British zines but often have something so outlandish in its own clumsy way that one is really grateful to the writer for having written it. American faneds seem to try harder, make bigger jackasses of themselves, and also occasionally go beyond what one expected. British faneds seem to avoid foolishness more successfully but pay for that with inhibitions against the surprisingly good. But I am coming to like British fandom a little better than American fandom: there is a kind of loving hatred evident in British fandom (not so clearly in LURK, I think) that reminds me of that definition of democracy as a group of people who hate one another working together. For some reason I find myself wishing I were part of the group.

((Thank you for a lucid and surprisingly perceptive appraisal of a neo's view of fanzines and fandom. Some of your comments struck home with great accuracy, though I think your comparison of British and American fanzines is distorted, as I remarked to Sheryl, by only seeing the picture from one side. I hope that all U.K. faneds will take note of your offer to collect zines, and will respond, quite simply because the more fanzine collections there are around the world, even though they may be very incomplete, the more permanent and complete will be the jigsaw of fannish history, for the benefit of future fans.))

KIEN OZANNE,  
'The Cottonwoods',  
42 Meek's Crescent,  
Faulconbridge,  
NSW 2776,  
Australia.

What do you mean there is nobody local? Everyone in England is local. After all, this state is about three or four times the size of the British Isles and I get to see most of the active fen in it every month.

\_\_\_\_\_  
((Yeah, but I thought most of Australia's actifen lived in the same town as you anyway? Seriously though, I suppose that Aussiefen, living such vast distances from each other, accept the travel problem more readily. There doesn't seem to be all that much personal contact between groups (within groups, yes) over here, except at cons of course.))

HARRY WARNER,  
423 Summit Avenue,  
Hagerstown,  
Maryland 21740, U.S.A.

I can't think of much to say about this set of excerpts from the con interview, unless it's a philosophical observation on how these famous pros are fain to revert back to their early fannish experience instead of drawing on professional adventures for their happiest memories. Curiously, I can't think of any happiness out of science fiction that rivaled those inspired by acquisitions: the first time I became the owner of a prozine, and even more important, the time a local second-hand store put on to its shelves a dozen absolutely mint copies of 1927-28 Amazing Stories for a dime each.

I hope the automobile becomes extinct, except for emergency purposes when fast transportation is necessary. A return to the trolley era would seem to be the most logical way to convert to a different method of getting around. The only real objection to trolleys, before autos became so numerous, was their noise output. It should be possible to reduce the decibels. I can't think of any other transportation which is as efficient and contributes as little to the pollution problem. Nobody ever seems to blame the auto for one of its most serious effects on civilisation: the way it takes people away from other people. Each individual or small group is in his own steel womb, cut off from communicating with or even clearly seeing any of the other travelers, and a lot of drivers let off hostilities by yelling at other motorists or threatening them with driving styles. When you ride buses or trains or you walk, you are separated from many other people by just the empty air, you don't dare act belligerently without cause because this could lead to a punch in the nose, and travelers get a sense of being part of humanity instead of confining themselves to a lonely drive or the presence of just a couple of family members or friends.

((Frankly, the thought of finding a dozen 1927-28 Amazings, even at 2p each, wouldn't excite me very much, only insofar as I would realise their scarcity. But as an inveterate book- and record-hunter and scourer of second-hand shops, I know the feeling of finding a long-sought item at a bargain price. I always feel guilty at being pleased in this way, since I realise the falsity of materialism, but I can't help it. As far as records are concerned, I have often justified myself by thinking that I would be quite happy to dispose of the actual records, provided I could have instant easy access to the material they contain, but I can't extend that justification to my books and magazines. There's something about the sight and smell of pulp that really turns me on, man. Excuse me whilst I go and make love to a 1942 Astounding.))

JIM MEADOWS III, I'm slow, but I get there sooner or later. 7 months isn't  
31 Apple Court, that long, is it? At any rate I am now ((Easter Monday 1974))  
Park Forest, loccing the October issue of LURK.  
Illinois 60466,  
U.S.A.

All these British fans seem to be knee deep in conventions!  
I have never been to one myself, and have to wonder what they are like. I'd probably embarrass myself during one anyhow, putting down the STAR TREK books while James Blish was in the room, or asking Phil K. Dick for a quarter for the cold drink machine.

I agree with Archie Mercer on beer; what I have tasted seems to have been brewed from rice. However, I am following on faith the theory of Mike Royko, an American newspaper columnist (Chicago Daily News) that this is not the true taste of beer, only of mass-produced big name beer, pumper up with chemicals, tasting like it was 'run through a horse'. Royko conducted a beer-tasting test, gathering half a dozen beer drinkers together and giving them various brands of beer in unmarked mugs. After the votes were tallied, it was found that European brands, and small American brands that don't advertise, would make the top, with the beer drinkers going on how wonderful it was, and how they could drink this all day. Meanwhile Budwiser, Schlitz, Miller, Old Chicago, all these big American brands which paid millions for ads on ball game broadcasts, and that these beer drinkers had been consuming for decades, suddenly paled beside these other brands. The basic contention was like Archie Mercer's; if they didn't say bat's piss, they meant about the same thing.

((About the last thing I expected was to get a loc on LURK 5 almost seven months after publishing the thing. It just shows there's something to be said for long gaps between issues after all. Actually if you look again you'll see it was me who was going on about the quality of beer. I can't imagine Archie using the phrase 'bat's piss' in connection with anything! From what you say, though, your beer must be even worse than ours, if there were any English brands among the European group. Is home-brewing illegal over there? I can't offhand think think of ever seeing any reference to it in the States. In my experience even an average home-brew is more enjoyable than the mass-produced stuff, as well as being stronger, of course.))

DON ALLEN,  
12 Briar Edge,  
Forest Hall,  
Newcastle-upon-Tyne 12.

I don't go along with the assumption that fan-groups produce the best fanzines. Fan-groups can sometimes get too wrapped up in their own self-importance, with the result being their fanzines are usually full of in-jokes and stories that no one else has a clue about. Whereas an individual Trufaned usually takes in the whole compass of Fandom. Contribs and locs come from all over the world, and not just a few odds and ends by unknown locals. One of the major differences between current fanzines, especially British ones, and those of the fifties and early sixties is the lack of international unity! At present, British Fandom seems to be jogging along doing its own thing whereas there used to be more harmony with other countries. More so with America. There was certainly closer contact between British and U.S. fans and their fanzines reflected this. Events in Britain had an effect on American Fandom, and vice versa; now the two seem to go their own way. The course is the same, but that unity is no longer there.

I disagree with Cy Chauvin's comment that sf fans are more intelligent than the general public. A right load of bull that! Cy falls into the trap of thinking that Fandom is unique! Once upon a time I too was of the opinion that your sf fan was more intellectual than Joe Public. That no one else wrote letters by the score, read so many books, pubbed fanzines and all the other activities associated with sf Fandom. Then I discovered other Fandoms! It was such a shock to learn that other bodies had such things as fanzines, etc. I got into Country & Western Fandom and read their fanzines, and what fantastic conventions they have. Listening to 'Country Club' on Radio 2 the other week I heard a C&W fanned describing the joys of publishing a fanzine! In the days when I was burning the candle at both ends I was so involved with sf Fandom that my World was confined to it alone. All my waking hours were devoted to Fandom, (even dreamed about Fandom taking over the world). I didn't have time for other hobbies or activities. However, when the pangs of gafia started to wear off in the mid-sixties I found there was a hole in my life which needed filling. Sf Fandom wasn't doing too well at that time, or it didn't appear to be from the few contacts I made, so I drifted into other Fandoms in which my interests lay: archaeology, Country music, astronomy, horse racing, stamps and coins, history. Once you got involved and through the sercon wall, each one had its own fannish qualities. Sort of parallel universe Fandoms.

When corresponding by tape I tried to get a "Song for Fandom" competition going. A blank tape was sent to each participant who had to record his song and then the complete tape was to be played at a Con or some fan gathering. The idea never really got off the ground, and there were some bloody awful singers on the trial-tapes!

Ghoodminton; a great game. I don't remember all the rules - not that there

were many - but it was like Badminton! Players lined up over a narrow table with a high net and using square bats, without handles, knocked a shuttlecock back and forth.

((Hmmm. Sounds a bit mundane the way you describe it. I'd expected all sorts of strange fannish rules and hazards. But I'll take you up on your offer of a piece describing your intro to the game; that's the sort of fan-writing I want to publish.

There certainly are a lot of other fanzines besides those in sf fandom; how long they've been around, of course, is a different matter. Maybe we were the first. I've recently begun subscribing to RUMBLE, a fanzine devoted to pop instrumental records; it's really quite similar to a sercon genzine like CYPHER, except that it doesn't feature artwork. It has an editorial, articles by contributors, discographies instead of bibliographies, record reviews instead of book reviews, and letters from readers. There's no doubt that the literary standard of the editor and his contributors is quite high, but to judge from the letter column, the readers don't match up too well; certainly there the standard is not as high as you'd find in most sf fanzines, sercon or fannish. Still, I don't dispute your point, Don; I think sf fans are sometimes a little smug, and need shaking up a bit.))

#### WE ALSO HEARD FROM:

DAVE PIPER, who sent a couple of columns, one of which appears herein, and who moaned about the non-appearance of his artwork. Soon, baby.

KEVIN SMITH, of Sfinx fame, who said funny things in an annoyingly unquotable way.

TERRY JEEVES, who said he knew he'd enjoy it before he opened it, and was right.

The late GILLON FIELD; a great and sad loss to fandom.

JOHN PIGGOTT, who was faithless enough to think that LURK had lurked its last. Not quite yet, anyway, John.

ANDREW STEPHENSON, who must be clairvoyant as he liked LURK 6 way back in October. You're not the only one, Andrew. We'll try and make it clearer this time.

ERIC LINDSAY, who said he gets a lot of U.S. zines which are unreadable because of poor duplicating. Come on, I'm curious; let's name names.

Thank you one and all. Whether you're quoted or not, your efforts are greatly appreciated.

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ARE YOU READY FOR THE COMMON MARKET? A document of dubious humour under the above title was circulating round the computer section at Rolls-Royce recently. I quote a few examples:

BONNET: der Fingerpinscher und Kopfchopper

AIR HORN: der Vatderhellvasdat Klaxenfanfaren

PUNCTURE: das Pflatt mit Dammundblasten

L-DRIVER: Dummkopf Elplatt

ESTATE CAR: der Schnogginwagen mit Bagzeromfurrompininderback

POWER BRAKES: das Schtoppinwerks mit edbangeron der Vindscreen

PETROL: der Kostlijuze fur geddindergreazoffendentrousen

Ghosh! It's my wife!

I thought you and I could have a womb party.

So what if it is biologically impossible? This is an sf con, isn't it?

I know I went to the fancy-dress party as a virgin, but that doesn't mean you can sacrifice me!

Now - I'll hum, and you sway.

Are you sure this is the fannish initiation ceremony?

Ohhhk Ian!!!

Nonsense! This is a Dyson Sphere where on - quite safe!

If you laugh, I'll lift my left arm and pee on you!

No, no - it's my inner self that I reveal through fanzines!

What do you mean, I look like a man clutching at straws?

But I thought you said it was called SEECON?

Keef having Brian... I guess could rise on the third day, so can you.

Do I need an operation, doctor? I keep passing quote cards.

STAND ON ZANZIBAR was good, but four in a bed is ridiculous!

This may be my first convention, Mr. Aldiss, but you can't convince me that's the B.S.F.A. award!

Gosh, Ian! - and you say you owe it all to Newcastle Brown!?

How is it all these other windows never say anything?



If you laugh, I'll lift my left arm and pee on you!

No, no - it's my inner self that I reveal through fanzines!

What do you mean, I look like a man clutching at straws?

But I thought you said it was called SEECON?

My name is Van Allen, and my belt just broke.

Anybody got a fanzine handy? Sercon, fannish, anything'll do!

I'll loe it, honest I will! Please??

Aaagh!! No, not MICRODOT!

Thank you, Uri Sellar!



You mean, this was your  
hide-polish?!

I asked for Newcastle Brown,  
not newt-asshole brown!

I've been sitting here all  
evening drinking this stuff,  
and now you tell me you  
use it as a laxative...!

Life is a gamma ray,  
old chum.

Look, I'll tell you  
once more - I  
didn't rub  
the bloody  
glass!

They say  
this is the  
only known  
antidote for  
banquet food.



So what's it to you if  
I tell Irish jokes?

Well how was I to know  
your baby had fallen  
in there?

Waiter!! There's an  
AUCL in my beer!

For the last time,  
no I will not  
support your bid  
for Deneboon!

MAN: Waiter, there's  
a macrobiotic organ-  
ism in my beer!

ALIEN: That's no  
macrobiotic organ-  
ism, that's my wife!

Are those my false teeth?

You mean you didn't recognise four-eyes J.  
Ackermann?

Hasn't anyone ever told you?  
You look just like something  
out of a bad human movie!

I used to be just like you - then I started  
reading Philip K. Dick.

OK, failure, get back in  
the test-tube!

With two eyes and two arms,  
you must be an earlier model.

My ghod! Someone  
smaller than Ian  
Williams!



Are you the one who com-  
plained about my poor  
characterisation?

I give in; what is  
twelve feet tall,  
has three eyes and  
two right arms?

As an Earthman, you  
should know better than  
to phlonk in the oofum!

Well, your name's  
not Vernon, and  
that's for sure!

Are you the banqueting  
manager? I'd like to  
report a hitherto un-  
known effect of hors  
d'oeuvres.

WHAT?

I SAID IT'S  
NOT SO  
BLOODY EASY  
MAKING  
JOKES WITH  
THE WINDOW  
SHOT....

Howe/Beatty 74



I've got a picture of Brian Aldiss doing  
research for THE HAND-REARED BOY!....

....and a picture of John Brunner saying  
a prayer to himself!

Hey! Anybody seen that bloke with his  
trousers down??

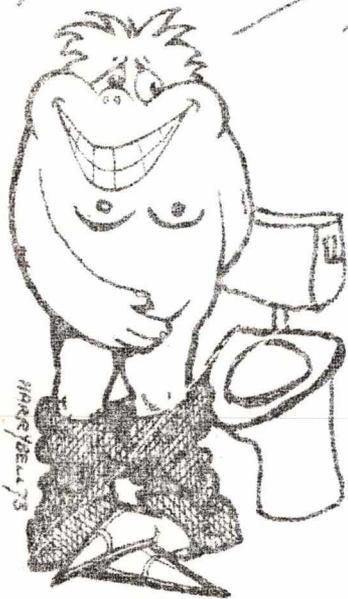
GO AHEAD,  
HOWIE.

OPEN THE BAR!  
OR I'LL JUMP.

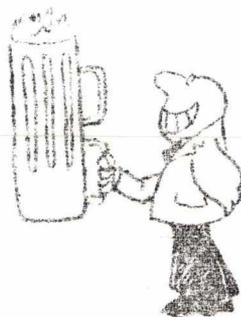
GREAT TIME  
TO GO INTO  
A SEX  
CHANGE...

I THINK THAT'S  
MINE YOU'RE  
DRINKING

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